

To the Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am regretful that I am unable to be present today to testify in person regarding three incredibly important bills. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide this electronic submission in my absence.

First, I would like to communicate my strong support for HB 5416 (Section 2), an amendment to cruelty statutes (Title 53, Chapter 945) that would prohibit confinement of gestating sows in a manner that prevents them from turning around freely, lying down, standing up, or fully extending their limbs. Gestating sows suffer tremendously in crates that nearly immobilize them during repeated cycles of impregnation. In crates with dimensions of 2"x7", these pigs suffer pain, muscle and bone weakness, and often lameness. I am seeking to support best practices followed by local, Connecticut farmers and to prevent large factory farms from moving to our state in order to conduct business using inhumane gestation crates.

Additionally, I would like to communicate my opposition for HB 5080. The authorization of bow and arrow hunting on Sundays would not resolve our deer-related problems, as populations increase to the capacity of the perimeter habitats following hunting season. Further, bow hunting results in high numbers of wounded deer who do not die and who move on to suffer outside the permissible hunting area. It is also true that Sunday hunting risks the public safety of citizens who seek to enjoy nature outdoors. I seek a deer management program that focuses on site-specific solutions and technologies such as PZP immunocontraception programs.

Lastly, I seek to support S.B. 445, but I request two additional requirements: that all new pet stores are not permitted to sell commercially-bred dogs, and that current pet stores phase out the sale of commercially-bred dogs. It is legal under the federal Animal Welfare Act to keep dogs stacked in cages with wire flooring with only six inches to move in either direction. Under these conditions, dogs' paws and legs are injured at times and excrement falls through the spaces to cages below. Even with these minimum standards, USDA enforcement is not consistent. Instead of commercial breeding, I seek support for adoption and rescue, which further serves to reduce the thousands of dogs and cats euthanized in Connecticut municipal shelters.

I thank you so very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Megan Rudne Hoffecker
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